

The Coming Day.

APRIL, 1899.

THE UPLIFTED CHRIST.

SPOKEN AT CROYDON.

I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.—John xii. 32.

It is doubtful whether Jesus actually said this, or whether it was one of those crystallized traditions which unquestionably are to be found in this unique Gospel.

In any case, the saying exhibits remarkable insight. It is so. The uplifting of Jesus has drawn all men to him,—has carried him to the inmost heart of the world, and given him, for his enduring throne, the souls of millions of lovers and devotees. The very cross itself (as the crucifix), has become a kind of charm over the larger half of Christendom; and Good Friday is kept with a carefulness that is hardly equalled by the keeping of Christmas Day. And, account for it as we may, it is certainly a wonderful fact, and a fact which wants accounting for, that the greatest character in all history, the one man who, beyond all comparison, shines out as the mightiest attracting power,—the one man who has even been adored as a God,—is this man Jesus, the carpenter's son, the despised evangelist, the wandering reformer, the crucified malefactor, the heroic teacher who asked for nothing and gave up everything,—whose eminence was not a blood-bought despot's throne, but a blood-stained martyr's cross.

And it is the uplifting that has drawn men unto him, so that even men who cannot imitate him are moved to adore him. It was his cross which gave him power. And so wonderfully has this worked upon the hearts of men, that he has not only been elevated above all other men by his uplifting on the cross, but he has been uplifted even above the almighty God Himself. The hymns, the prayers, the passionate appeals of the churches are addressed, not to the Father, but to the Son,—to the crucified Saviour, not to God on the great white throne;—such wondrous power is given to the spectacle of a suffering, devoted, dying man. There is profound significance in the saying, applied to any teacher; ‘He being dead yet speaketh’—yes, and often with more touching effect and more persuasive power than when alive in the flesh.

But in the homeliest ways we know how true this is, how the uplifting wins sympathy, how sacrifice conquers power, how suffering softens enmities, how death stills strifes. Shakspeare makes Antony say; ‘The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones;’ but the reverse is oftener true,—that the good which men do lives after them, while the evil is interred with their bones. How, after the uplifting, do we remember all the good sides of the man, the kindly sayings, the earnest tone, the little sacrifices, the tender asides of life! ‘De mortuis nil nisi bonum’ we say,—bring up nothing but what is good concerning the dead.

A famous man lies dangerously ill, perhaps as the result of over-exertion in the cause he loves; and everybody at once lowers his weapon. Contention is hushed, intensest antagonists and closest friends say kindly things. President Lincoln is shot; and that ends the struggle. He wins at once the almost adoring reverence and love of all; and the cause he loved is won beyond all recall: and all history does show that the ‘blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.’ The truth is that the very deepest emotions in us, the profoundest instincts of the moral and spiritual self are appealed to by the uplifting, especially of the self-denying and the good. Pity is awakened, pathos touches, admiration wins, shame (perhaps remorse)

disturbs, the imagination is quickened, and mean self-care is shamed: and, over all, a kind of sacred reverence gathers, with its wondrous, subtile, winning power. So has it been with Jesus, and so is it now.

The apostles knew this, and few things come out more vividly in the Epistles of Paul. The deepest thing in the Christianity of Paul was his living and loving hold of the crucified Jesus. It was as though the sight of that murdered hero became, for him, a mighty magnetic power: and Unitarians, in their natural and necessary revolt against the heathenish old doctrines of Atonement, have somewhat lost sight of the real significance of the cross. 'The preaching of the cross,' said Paul, 'is to some "foolishness," but to us it is "the power of God."' He went so far as to say that he himself was 'crucified with Christ': and 'the life which I now live,' he said, 'I live by the faith of the son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me': and in one glowing passage he pictures Jesus as taking the sins and burdens of the world, and going up with them to the cross,—nailing them to his cross, and triumphing over them in doing it. No wonder that very early in the Christian Church the cross became the symbol of the Church's struggle; and that 'In this sign conquer' was a legendary message flashed from heaven: and still the pathetic story of the cross melts, chastens, heartens, arouses, shames, subdues: still it wins the heart, the conscience and the life; and still even the Unitarian can sing,—

In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time,
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.

And 'the light of sacred story' does gather there, let the darkness of the other story gather where it may; though it often takes the cleansèd eye of faith to see it. For all through the centuries, not self-denial, not self-sacrifice, not the uplifting of the cross, but the rule of force seems to prevail: and compulsion seems to draw men hither and thither. But it is not so in the long run; it is never really so at all in the deeper things: for power always really goes with love, and the will

goes where the heart goes : and the king is always he who is most trusted and revered,—is he who touches the conscience and wins the heart, let who will sit upon the throne and make men bow the knee.

It is not easy for us to see this and to prove it for ourselves, for the days of martyrdoms are over ; but our forerunners knew it well. We are not called upon to be martyrs ; but confessors we all may be : we cannot die for God, but we can live for Him. We shall not be uplifted by others, but we can uplift and sacrifice ourselves for others : and we can still, in our way, draw men unto us,—by generous forebearances, by gracious yieldings, by service that costs us something,—by taking up a cross that someone must carry. And we may be sure that what was true for Jesus on so vast a scale will be true for us in our poor way : for, indeed, it is only a law of all life that self-surrender is a winning and a conquering power. From the bully at school to the dictator among the rulers of the earth, it is, in the long run, true that self-assertion repels, makes enemies, and lays up a bad reckoning for some judgment day. For a time, fear or self-interest may lead people to side with the bully or applaud the dictator, but, in reality, everyone is eager for his overthrow, and would rejoice at his fall. The opposite is true of the generous spirits, of those who live, not to assert themselves, but to benefit others. Except in a fearfully low state of society, these are not the people the wreckers delight to swoop down upon, or whose necessity is made the dictator's opportunity. These compel respect, admiration, confidence, sympathy, love ;—they draw all men unto them. If a man is combative, and relies upon physical force, he makes others combative, and incites others to rely on physical force. If a man stands utterly and unyieldingly upon what he calls his 'dignity,' and insists upon every iota of what he regards as his 'rights,' and, like Shylock, demands his pound of flesh, answering every appeal by the cruel monotony of 'It is not so nominated in the bond,' he makes himself an Ishmaelite—his hand against everyone, and everyone's hand against him : but, before a man with a conscience as well as a bond,

with a heart as well as a good case in law, with a helpful hand to be offered as well as a right he might insist upon,—before the man who is uplifted by his own self-denial, the heads of all but savages are made bare, the sword-point drops, ‘the fountains of the great deep are broken up’ and all men cry ‘Well done,’ or say, ‘God bless him!’”

The history of nations proves it as well as the biographies of men. The nations that have gone down have been the quarrelsome, the aggressive, the intolerant, the inflexible. ‘They that take the sword shall perish by the sword,’ said the wise, shrewd Jesus. And they have so perished—and will. And the strong nations are strongest on the sides that have relation to self-abnegation, and not to self-assertion. It is not true, for instance, that England is strong, and influential, and respected, because she has been a conqueror, and is able and determined to ‘hold her own.’ But we have our peculiar place and influence in the world far more because of our sacrifices than because of our stiffness,—because we have given up the divine right of kings, and the rule of classes, and the governing authority of rank or wealth, because we bought up and freed our slaves, because we are the one nation among the old aristocratic nations of Europe which has made a peaceable and voluntary end of feudalism, and steadily gone on in its great resolve to break down caste and privilege, and to bring the poorest labourer up to the level of the most powerful aristocrat, in relation to the responsibilities of citizenship, and in the eyes of the law. It has been a great uplifting for a proud and a power-loving people, and it has drawn all men unto us. And if there are dark problems and difficult tasks still before us, we may be sure that the old lights might serve to guide us now. The gospel for to-day is not ‘Britons, hold your own,’ but ‘Christians—be just and fear not—and go on to the cross, if that must be.’ Yes! that way greatness as well as goodness lies.

The path of self-assertion, of inflexible pride, of selfishness, of unyielding power, is strewn with the sepulchres and ruins of mightiest empires, but the path even of safety is the path of service, surrender, generosity, good-will.

Not very long ago, in South Africa, when one of our English generals, instead of shooting down the men who stood in his way, obeyed the orders of the government, and met them to settle terms of peace, a warlike colonel said that the general would rather have been at the head of his troops in battle than at the negotiator's table. And many thought, with this colonel, that we had, as a nation, been lowered, humiliated, degraded, before the nations of the world. But, though some sneered, and others laughed, that told on Europe, and helped to draw men to us even against their will. Tried, however, by Christ's spirit, tried by Christ's life, tried by Christ's teachings, tried by the standard of the cross, this English general never did anything half so good for himself, so useful to his country, and so wholesome for the world: for Europe has been cursed, is cursed, and will be cursed, with the self-assertions of jealous nations, and the pernicious ambitions of rulers; and, to this day, survivals of the brute stage of human development hang about us like antique rags. And the world is becoming conscious of it;—or the peoples are, if the rulers are not; and what we did in South Africa shines out as a guiding star. We overcame the brute instinct in us: we rose superior to the fear of being thought afraid: we put aside the poor flimsy tinsel of our 'dignity,' and silenced the snarl of wounded pride: and we dared to do right for pure right's sake. Instead of shouldering our musket, and shooting our man, we shouldered our cross, and went on to our little crucifixion: and I say the world did not laugh at us; the world did not pity us; the world did not think that our English general would have been happier, or better employed on the battle field: and, if that divine experiment could be repeated, the pulse of Europe would be less feverish because of it, and the example would bear fruit, in softening asperities, in strengthening the hands of the men of peace in every nation, in begetting confidence in such a phenomenon as a national conscience: and who can tell where that would end? To-day all this may seem utopian,—utopian to ask Christian nations to be what they profess to be,—utopian to ask emperors and their tools to

act like the Jesus they profess to worship as a God, —utopian to look for the working out of the ape and tiger from the man. But why utopian? Simply because, for 1,800 years, not conduct but doctrine and ceremonial have been the cardinal things in Christendom: and who knows whether, even now, I may not be regarded as an unpractical dreamer for saying these things! Be it so: but, in the long run, the dreamers move the world.

CONFORMITY AND CONSCIENCE.

SPOKEN AT CROYDON.

A book for the times has just been given to the world by Canon W. Page Roberts, it is called 'Conformity and Conscience,'* and is evidently intended as an Apologia for the Prayer Book, and a help or a sedative to disturbed worshipers in the Church. In some respects it is a disappointing book: in other respects it is a most suggestive one: in either case it is a sign of the times. A good deal of it, the greater part of it indeed, has next to nothing to do with the title, consisting of bright, adroit and enlightening studies of the Psalms and various portions of the Prayer Book; but, at critical moments, the book is keenly interesting, and one is almost tempted to think that certain rousing passages were purposely placed in the safe custody of edifying paragraphs which nobody would dispute. But, be that as it may, the book, if taken as a whole, is an ardent defence of the Book of Common Prayer; not the work of a critic, but almost of a devotee.

A disappointing feature of the book is its almost entire ignoring of the crucial matter,—the case of conscience which arises in connection with the vows taken by the clergy. Mr. Page Roberts appears to have only the laity in his mind. It is almost as though he set out to shew why the congregation need not go away because it could not believe. He does not seem to be much concerned about the clergy. He says,

If the Church compelled you to accept in unquestioning faith and humble approval all and every part of her formu-

* London: Smith, Elder & Co.

laries, then indeed you might, for the sake of truth and conscience, be forced to turn away from her. But do not let the intolerance of dogmatists force you out of the Church.

and again, 'In the public service, the worshipers are not compelled to make a personal declaration of assent to the creed.' It is difficult to see that. In a very solemn manner, the worshipers all stand up, as a rule, turn one way, and recite the creed. If they do not believe it, they seem to do so, and the intention is strongly that they should. I for one do not comprehend Mr. Page Roberts' suggestion that the worshipers need not believe what they appear to profess to believe. But what of the clergyman who has professed his belief, who has sworn to teach the creed as his creed, and who holds his office as a believer and as a teacher of the creed? Mr. Page Roberts is a splendid advocate. He has a case to defend and he does it well, but he does not grapple with this question, though he is manifestly uncomfortable. He recognises the urgent 'necessity for presenting the dogmas of the past in the forms of thought of the present.' He says,

If the wants or the knowledge of the day demand rearrangements, or re-expression of our forms and formulæ, let us claim our Christian liberty.

But the clergy has not got that 'liberty.' They are bound.

As to creeds generally, if not quite convincing, he is at least adroit. 'A creed,' he says, 'is simply what a man believes : ' and he thinks that creeds ought to be, not impositions from without, but expressions of joyous belief from within. Speaking of the early Christians, he says, 'the teaching of Christ was a treasure they coveted, not a bad medicine to be taken in the smallest possible doses.' True, but if the creeds are now like 'bad medicine' from which many good men shrink, that is so because the creeds have outlived their day. And here Mr. Page Roberts really seems to understand us, and to sympathise with us. Referring to those who chafe under the pressure of dogma, he says,

When they say they want Christianity without dogmas, they do not mean that there is no such thing as truth. What they must mean is, that they will not be forced without conclusive evidence to say that they believe in everything which

some particular set or sect of men say they believe in; that no man, no body of men, no pope, council, convocation, conference or general assembly, has the competence to lay down the dogmatic conditions on which alone God may receive a soul into His saving presence. Churches may make their own conditions of membership. They are not the gate-keepers of the heavenly world.

That is a very fair statement of our case as against the Church; but Mr. Page Roberts, like the old Scotch Divine, looks it boldly in the face, and—passes on.

In our opinion, the great stumbling block is the document very improperly called 'The Apostles' Creed.' Mr. Page Roberts does his very best to defend it and commend it, but he makes significant admissions. He says frankly,

Were it not for the fact that baptism is usually administered to infants, and confirmation conferred on youthful, uncritical minds, and that sponsors who answer for children do so very often with little serious grasp of that which they profess, the baptised, their sponsors and the confirmed might hesitate before they declared of the whole creed: 'All this I steadfastly believe.' What do they steadfastly believe when they say, 'Conceived of the Holy Ghost,' a clause which is not found in the more philosophical Nicene Creed, nor even in the boldly defining Athanasian Creed, but 'appears first in the creed assigned to Augustine'? What do they steadfastly believe when they say, 'He descended into Hell'—a phrase, again, which does not occur in the Nicene Creed, which simply declares, 'He suffered and was buried'? What do they consciously mean by 'The right hand of God the Father,' an article which first appears in 'Faustus, then in the Gallican and Spanish creeds, but not in the English'? What is the clear faith which animates their breasts when, for themselves or for the infants they represent, they avow their belief in the 'communion of saints and in the resurrection of the body'? Some who can express their faith in immortality by the words of the Nicene Creed, 'I believe in the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come,' shrink from the phrase, 'resurrection of the body,' or, as it is given in the office of Holy Baptism, 'in the resurrection of the flesh.'

There is more than a little veiled satire in this remarkable passage. He seems to say that the people concerned are not staggered at the creed, because they are either babies who cannot think, young and uncritical people who will not think, and gentlemen with silver mugs who are simply good-natured and do not think. But what an indictment of the creed this really is!

It surely is a very serious matter. But Mr. Page Roberts is ready with his remedy—in 'presenting the dogmas of the past in the forms of thought of

the present.' Thus, he asks whether it is not permissible to regard 'the resurrection of the body' as meaning 'a spiritual body or "eternal form"';—a palpable gloss. But he simply ignores the great difficulties, and merely says that

Many of these clauses contain grave theological truths, which, like profound scientific conceptions, can only be comprehended by the expert few. They must ever remain unintelligible to the many; and for this reason they need not be required of all as a condition of entrance into the fold of Christ. But in the public service, the worshippers are not compelled to make a personal declaration of assent to the creed, as they are in Holy Baptism.

What an extraordinary thing to say about a creed which everybody is supposed to believe! It is a very short creed, and yet, it appears, it contains 'many clauses' which, 'like profound scientific conceptions, can only be comprehended by the expert few. They must ever remain unintelligible to the many'! What an admission!—an admission which has its sinister side when you note that comprehension by experts means exhausting plain words of plain meaning, and, for example, making the resurrection of the body mean the persistence of the spirit.

And then, having ignored or glossed over such unbearable statements as 'born of the Virgin Mary' and, 'the resurrection of the body,' he thinks he can help us by saying,

A large place, in which freedom may range, is reserved; and thus many may be joined together in the communion of the Church who would have been excluded by a more exacting creed. 'Justin Martyr, in argument with Trypho the Jew, tells him of the existence of a considerable body of Christians (men belonging to our race), who denied the Incarnation and the Virgin Birth, but still believed Christ to be Messiah. They are not the majority, for the majority prefer to be guided by the teaching of the prophets and of Christ. But they exist, and Justin is ready to urge Trypho and other Jews, if they cannot accept the idea of the Incarnation and Virgin Birth, at least to come as far as these persons and to believe in Jesus as the Messiah.' And I, too, would say, 'Come with us,' to those whose infant faith can only stammer the name of Master at the feet of Jesus.

But this is not fair. It will not do to say to us, 'Come poor infants, and stammer.' We are not infants, and we do not stammer. We are adults and we speak quite plainly, and what we say is that we do not believe that Jesus is the only

son of God ; that we do not believe that he was born of the Virgin Mary ; and that we do not believe in the resurrection of the body. And, with all modesty, we think our denial is not the result of immaturity and weakness, but of ripeness and strength.

The Athanasian Creed, so-called, is admittedly a 'forgery.' Mr. Page Roberts begins by quoting Dr. Swainson, a late professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, who says quite plainly,

Forgery it certainly was: that the production of this work under the name of Athanasius was an intentional and deliberate attempt to deceive, no reasonable person can question. It was analogous to the production of the forged Decretals. And it is doubtless to the skill with which the imposture was wrought out that we owe the difficulty that has been felt in so many years in discovering the author.

and ends by quoting a Bishop of Chester,

I wish I could see any near hope of this stumbling block—the minatory clause—being removed by the revision of the formulary.

After this, anything else that Mr. Page Roberts may say of this 'forgery' is not worth discussing. But one reference cannot be passed over. The Athanasian Creed says that if we do not think in a certain way of the Trinity we shall undoubtedly perish everlastingly: and a writer in Canon Gore's 'Lux Mundi' says, with the too familiar twist, that 'the truth of which Christ's incarnation is the pivot and centre is the only deliverance from everlasting perishing:' and then Mr. Page Roberts says,—Yes, 'for the truth of the incarnation is that God is love:' and, if we are sure that God is love, we have indeed a deliverance from everlasting perishing.' But what conjuring this is! There is all the difference in the world between the Creed's, 'You must thus think or you will be damned,' and Mr. Page Roberts' gloss,—'If you know that God is love you know you are safe, whatever you think.' He really gives the Creed the lie. He says,

It is the truth of God's love which delivers us from everlasting perishing, not our knowledge of that truth. Our ignorance does not change God's nature; and it is for His sake we are saved, and not our own. If God had by nature been cruel and tyrannical, a kind of Moloch, there would be no security against perishing everlastingly. But there is all the difference between a truth and a knowledge of the truth.

The truth of the Incarnation, that God is Love, remains a deliverance from everlasting perishing, whether like the heathen, the Jew, the Mussulman, the Calvinist, the Agnostic we know it or not ; whether we contradict or confuse it or not.

So then, while the Creed deliberately and passionately damns the Jew, the Mussulman, and the Agnostic for not believing, Mr. Page Roberts says it does not matter whether you believe or not. God's love is all the same.

But did not Christ say, ' If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins ' ? True again, says Mr. Page Roberts,

But it does not say ye shall live for ever in your sins. Nearly all to whom Christ spake, nearly the whole Jewish race, refused to believe that Christ was the Divine Revealer. They died in their error, and in this sense died in their sins. But who can believe Christ meant that, because of their blunder, they should be tortured for evermore, or that at this moment, they roll in the pit of unutterable anguish ? It is impossible to make the words of the text attributed to Christ identical with the unqualified hopeless damnation pronounced by the Athanasian Creed on every one who does not keep whole and undefiled the Catholic faith. The Gospel and the Catholic faith are not identical ; to be damned does not necessarily mean to perish everlastingly ; the words of Christ are a solemn truth ; and the damnatory clause of the Athanasian Creed is literally a mis-interpretation of them.

What then about ' Conformity and Conscience ' ? and what about the clergy who find such difficulties in relation to the creeds ? Mr. Page Roberts indirectly tells us. He says,

To make a man say that he sees what he does not see is not to make him see it, it is to make him tell lies. To punish a man for not seeing something which he cannot see is, to use the quaint expression of Hood, to give a man ' two black eyes for being blind.'

Pity the poor clergyman who is made to say that he sees what he does not see ! It is not we who give him his ' two black eyes.' That is a matter he has to settle with his church, his vows, his conscience and his creeds. But what a scandal the whole thing is ! Here is a creed which is an admitted forgery, an imposture, intended to deceive, and yet the State commands it to be read as a part of the worship of God : and clergymen who are bound by law to so read it call it a lie ! The ritualists are denounced for violating the law. What about the rationalists ?

Last of all, we note that Mr. Page Roberts is not only for the presentation of old dogmas in new forms, but he is strongly in favour of comprehension, however impractical and illogical he may be in the mode he adopts for getting it.

He is eager for freedom. He looks back to the time when, as at the Reformation, the church took its life and its faith into its own hands, and he cries longingly,

Where is that freedom, that youthful vigour now? Has not the timidity of old age befallen her, and nervous dread of change taken the place of Christian faith and hope? A Church that dare not be free is doomed to die.

But 'dare not' is hardly the word. It simply cannot be free, unless it chooses to break the fetters of Parliament or violate the law. But why does not Mr. Page Roberts 'dare to be free'?

It is pitiable to see men trying to force the rude thoughts of a simple people into the moulds of the present, and to know that in the next generation they will have to be melted out and got into some other moulds.

So it is: but why does he stand it? His reply seems to be;—'Because I love the Church, and want to help use it as a mighty instrument for good.' He wants comprehension. In the days of the Long Parliament, he says, England had to learn 'toleration for diversity of opinion and religious observance outside the pale of an established Church:' but 'the lesson we in this age are called upon to learn is toleration within an established Church.' This toleration he thinks we are learning.

Once a clergyman was denied by a Bishop admission to a benefice because he was known to disbelieve in the regenerative power of the waters of baptism. But this episcopal decision was legally overruled. For years and years men were regarded with disfavour because they did not look upon the Mosaic account of creation as scientific truth, nor the Pentateuch as the work of Moses, nor the book of Daniel as belonging to the age of that spotless heroic patriot. Such subjects are now treated with candour and critical discrimination by the modern Sacerdotal School. Canon Gore, when head of the Pusey House, admitted that they 'are open to critical investigation, and that if they are established the Christian faith is in no ways impaired.' Let us be patient, and more will follow. God forbid that the ancient Church of England should not know the things that belong to her peace. God forbid that she should be stiff and dense, and childish and unaccommodatingly infallible and unchangeable; until

the strife of brothers revolt the nation, and the mandate of worldly contempt go forth, 'Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground.'

This is quite the right tone, because it respects our honest difficulties, and I wish that tone stood alone, but it does not. Too often, Mr. Page Roberts' tone, in referring to Nonconformists, is more than tinged with the usual insolence of the Church in dealing with Dissent. He says, of certain who hesitate,

Can such persons use the Morning and Evening Prayers of the Church of England? Not if they are the subjects of an acrid egotism. If they cannot ignore little blemishes, overlook little offences, put up with some things they do not prefer, and allow to other people parts or forms of the services for which they themselves do not care, then they had better set up a private oratory, furnish it with a looking-glass, and worship themselves. . . . Egotism is insignificance; and no sensible man will sit apart, feeding his egotism until it becomes a glutton, while fellow-feeling is left to starve. Who art thou to say, 'I do not like this; and, therefore, unless it is altered to suit me, I shall renounce the whole thing'? We forget the meaning of public worship if the passion which is dominant in us be a hungry selfishness. There are vain irritable natures who cannot understand compromise because they are incapable of sympathy, and who, if once contented, would be like to die of the unusual sensation.

That is sheer insolence, and just a little vulgar, and it will do no sort of good to the cause of comprehension. Elsewhere he refers to 'unlettered Dissenters,' and unpleasantly manifests just that kind of disdainful superiority which the free spirit of the conscientious Nonconformist naturally resents, and attributes to the egotism bred of state patronage and the pampered arrogance of vested interests.

But, on the whole, this book is worthy of the man and his cause; and that is why I have drawn attention to it. It is a fervid, eloquent and often winsome defence of the Book of Common Prayer and the mode of united worship for which it provides: and if it glosses over difficulties and gives prominence to what is good, one can hardly blame a lover of his church for that. If moreover, it does not clear up this urgent problem of 'Conformity and Conscience,' the badness of the case and not the ability of the advocate must be blamed.

THE ALLEGED PROPHECIES CONCERNING JESUS CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTA- MENT.

SIX LECTURES—REVISED.

LECTURE VI.

MISCELLANEOUS PASSAGES.

I SHALL proceed now to an examination of certain miscellaneous passages which are supposed to be prophecies concerning Christ, but which really are references to passing or impending national and political events. In Genesis xlix. 10, we read:—

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

I shall not dwell long on this: the only wonder is that it should ever have been cited as a prophecy concerning Christ. The passage itself, though put into the mouth of Jacob, had, in all probability, no existence till many centuries after Jacob's day,—till, in fact, 'Judah' had become a power under David; and then it expressed the fervid or defiant hope of the rising tribe. The word 'Shiloh' points out, not a person, but a place, and the correct translation probably is, not 'until Shiloh come,' but until he (*i.e.*, Judah), come to Shiloh. The very same words are used in I. Samuel iv. 12: of one who 'came to Shiloh.' The reference to Shiloh is obvious. It was a sacred city of Israel, whom Judah envied; and the poet predicts that Judah shall yet possess it. Or 'Shiloh' as the symbol of rest (with which word it is connected), may stand for the culmination of Judah's triumphs. Anyhow, it is to Judah that the 'gathering of the people' is to be, and Judah is personified and glorified all through. A comparison of this 'blessing' by Jacob with the 'blessing' by Moses (Deut. xxxiii. 7), brings out this meaning in a striking manner. Moses is made to beg for Judah that 'his people' may be brought to him, *i.e.*, that this tribe may occupy the first place, and be, in fact, the ruling power. In both cases it is perfectly obvious that the reference is to the political fortunes of a tribe, and not to the spiritual reign of a Messiah. Applied to Christ, the prophecy is not

only inappropriate but untrue, for the sceptre did depart from Judah before Christ came: it ceased in fact nearly 600 years before he came. But the application to Christ can best be shown to be inadmissible by applying my favourite test,—by reading what comes before and goes after. Listen then to the whole passage:—

Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up. He stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until he come to Shiloh; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: His eyes shall be red with wine and his teeth white with milk.

Who would apply the last half of the prediction to Christ? But the language might very well serve as a description of a jubilant and successful tribe.

In Deuteronomy xviii. 15, we have a passage that is quoted in the New Testament in one place, and believed to be referred to in another. The passage is:—

The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken.

This verse, Peter quotes in Acts iii. 22, applying it to Christ; and, in John v. 46, Christ himself, without quoting any particular passage, refers to Moses who 'wrote,' he says, of him. Now, to begin with, it is, one may say, absolutely certain that Moses did not write the Book of Deuteronomy at all. If Christ thought he did, he only shared the general tradition of his day; but the facts are irresistible, and it is no longer possible to believe that Moses wrote the words before us. But, whoever wrote the passage, it cannot be applied to Christ. It is part of a message from Jehovah to the children of Israel, and it must be taken as a whole. The occasion was the remembrance of the shrinking of the people before Sinai, when they entreated that God would not speak by thunder and lightning, but through Moses: and it is upon that, that Moses is told to promise them a prophet 'from among their brethren' like himself. What

an utterly inappropriate thing it would have been to have promised them a prophet in, perhaps, from one to two thousand years ! The whole point of it lies in having the prophet now or soon. They trembled at the thunder and lightning of Sinai, they begged for the voice of a man and not the thunder of a God ; and what they ask is promised them. But the special use of this prophet is explicitly stated. In the land to which they are going there are 'abominations,'—cruel-sacrifices, divinations, enchanters, witches, charmers, spirit mediums (verses 9-12). But they must not hearken to these, for God will raise them up a true prophet, to whom alone they must listen.

The time and circumstances, then, are fixed, and the prophet like unto Moses, that shall be raised up 'from among' them, is to be useful to the very persons addressed. But a succession of prophets is indicated, for the chapter goes on to distinguish between the good and the bad, the false and the true, prophets, and a test is given whereby the true prophet can be known ; and then the next chapter still further clinches the reference to the time of the speaker by dwelling upon the entrance of the Jews into the promised land. Besides, Christ was not a prophet 'like unto' Moses : he was utterly unlike him ; so unlike him that the Gospels contrast them again and again : so unlike him that in every point and on every ground the prophecy fails to be at all related to Christ, unless, indeed, we 'spiritualise' the local promise, and see in Christ, what indeed we well may see, the culmination of the prophetic office in him ; but that does not any more make the passage in Deuteronomy a prophecy of him.

A passage in Jeremiah xxxi. 15, is quoted in Matthew ii. 17-18, as having been fulfilled by the weeping of the Jewish mothers for their young children, slain by Herod. The passage in Jeremiah is ;—

Thus saith the Lord ; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping ; Rahel, weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not.

And in Matthew it says that the weeping of the Hebrew mothers in the time of Christ fulfilled

that. But the verse is a statement of fact and not a prediction; and what does the following verse in Jeremiah say? It says that God consoled the mourners by saying, 'Refrain from weeping. . . for they shall come again from the enemy . . . and there is hope that thy children shall come again to their own border':—a perfectly monstrous reply if we think of the weeping of the Hebrew mothers for their dead children, but an equally rational reply if we think of what is clearly meant—the weeping of Hebrew mothers for their children gone into captivity. The taking of that passage out of its connection and its application to the time of Christ cannot be defended for a moment, while its reference to an ancient raid upon Judah is as obvious. The 'Rahel' (or Rachel) of the passage is doubtless the wife of Jacob and the mother of Benjamin, the founder of the tribe to whom Ramah belonged. She is here poetically represented as weeping for her afflicted descendants, more than a thousand years after her death.

A passage in Zechariah xii. 10, would never have been pressed into service as a messianic prophecy, if it had not been quoted in the Gospels, as fulfilled by Christ. It runs thus:—

And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

The reference to this is in John xix. 37, when, after the record of the piercing of Christ, the passage is added,—

For these things were done that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

It looks just as though any phrase that seemed applicable sufficed as a prophecy; though here the passage is not even said to be a prophecy, but is only quoted as an apt saying: but that suggests a great deal as to the quotations in general of Old Testament scripture. A reference to the passage in Zechariah, and a mere glance at the context shows its utter irrelevancy as a prophecy con-

cerning Christ. In the first place, it is to be noted that the word 'me' and the word 'him' refer to the same person: the verse itself shows that. It says, 'they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him'—plainly it should be 'they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him.' This is the reading of the best manuscripts. The person pierced and the person mourned for are one. The reference is to some person of very great political and national importance; for it adds;—'In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem . . . and the land shall mourn, every family apart,'—a state of things utterly opposed to the reality when Christ was pierced. But the lines that follow make it even ridiculous to apply the statement to Christ: for it says that every one shall mourn for the pierced one,—

Every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.

Need anything be added to shew that the prophecy could not have referred to Christ, and that it is from first to last inapplicable to him? The time indicated is one during which a siege of Jerusalem is going on (verses 2 and 8), the end of it being the destruction of the besiegers (verse 9). But nothing of the kind happened in the time of Jesus. Then, so far from mourning for him, they execrated him, and, as one has said, 'curse him and his followers even to this day.' The meaning of the passage probably is that they shall mourn for king Jehoiakim as they had before mourned for king Josiah, who was slain in the valley of Meggidon.

In the passage I quoted just now, John xix. 36, you would notice the statement that certain things were done (to Christ) 'that the scripture should be fulfilled,—"A bone of him shall not be broken."' This referred to the piercing of Christ's side in place of breaking his legs. But the quotation from the Old Testament is woefully far-fetched; is, in fact, about as bad a case of accommodation as could be found. The passage referred to is in Exodus xii. 46, where the direction

is given not to break a bone of the passover lamb. This use of the words 'For these things were done that the scripture should be fulfilled' shews how loosely that formula could be used, and out of what unlikely and inappropriate material a prediction, a prophecy, or a promise could be extracted.

In this same book, we have a passage which, in like manner, is quoted, in the New Testament as applicable to Christ. The verse is in Zechariah ix. 9.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon (or even upon) a colt, the foal of an ass.*

The passage in which it is quoted is Matthew xxi. 4-5, where we find a record of Christ's riding into Jerusalem upon an ass, and the usual addition, 'All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet.' In the Hebrew, the 'ass' and the 'colt, the foal of an ass,' are one and the same: but the writer in Matthew suspiciously blunders, and lands us in the absurdity of Christ's riding on two animals; for it says:—'And the disciples . . . brought the ass and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set Jesus thereon.' If we turn to the place we shall see that this is another case of arbitrary procedure on the part of the evangelist, in the taking of a scrap from a description of one event and violently applying it to another. The king spoken of in Zechariah is evidently a political king, and one possessed or looked for in the time of Zechariah. That king is utterly unlike Christ. He rides indeed into Jerusalem, but that is the whole of the analogy. He is a ruler over vast domains, stretching from sea to sea; and, it immediately adds, the chariot, the battle horse, and the bow, shall be abolished, and the king shall be on peaceful terms with the Gentiles round about; and this is the king that rides into Jerusalem on an ass! The picture is perfectly consistent and clear, but it is a picture which excludes Christ. It is the picture of a rejoicing people welcoming their peaceful but mighty

* The passage is mistranslated. We should read:—'Thy king cometh to thee (he is just, and hath been saved), lowly and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt, the foal of an ass.' Probably, the person meant is king Hezekiah, who during some part of the Assyrian invasion had been in danger of being captured by Sennacherib.

monarch,—his enemies subdued or reconciled, and his dominion secure from sea to sea. It is worthy of note that in the 72nd Psalm we have a precisely similar description of the Jewish king's happy reign; and that too has been taken as a prophecy concerning Christ; but the inapplicability of it is manifest. The king there described is a political potentate, and phrases can only be applied to Christ by isolating them from their connection or spiritualizing the whole.

I shall quote one more passage from Zechariah. It is in chapter xiii. 7.

Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.

This has actually been quoted, not only as a prophecy concerning Christ, but as a proof of his Deity; since God here calls this 'man' His 'fellow'; although the Hebrew word only means a friend. The passage is quoted in Matthew xxvi. 31.

Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

Here again, no affirmation is made that the passage from Zechariah is a prophecy now to be fulfilled. It only says 'for it is written': but it has been freely taken as a prophecy. Turn to the place and what do you find?—You find a description of a sorrowful time for the nation. Its 'shepherd,' or leader, is to be struck down, and 'in all the land,' it says, two-thirds shall be cut off and die, and the remaining third shall be purified, and learn to call Jehovah their God. Not a word of this is applicable to Christ, but it is all a part of Zechariah's description of the scene connected with the smiting of the shepherd and the scattering of the sheep. It is simply a description of a terribly destructive invasion, and the scrap of it applied to Christ can only be made applicable by taking it utterly away from its connection. In all probability, the person meant is king Jehoiachin the successor of Jehoiakim above mentioned.

(To be concluded.)

A PRESENT-DAY PREACHER ON HADES.

THE series of volumes of sermons by 'Present-day preachers,' issued by Horace Marshall & Son, promises well. Vol. III., by Dean Lefroy, has been sent to us, and the sender has judged wisely. It gives us just the peep into the old house we like to see. The good Dean is ardently orthodox—or thinks he is; and yet the Time-Spirit has gripped him, and, in one place, gripped him hard.

The two important theological subjects in the book are The Incarnation and The Fate of Man in Hades. As to the first, he is hesitating, and somewhat inconsistent, as though the grip of the Time-Spirit were imperfect. As to the second, he is crisp and clear and almost vehement.

As to the Incarnation, he holds that Jesus was God, but does not say how, except by the suggestion that God took possession of the human Christ, a suggestion which no Unitarian would care to deny: for God takes possession of all things and all men, in varying ways and degrees. 'In Him we live and move and have our being,' everything could say.

Nor would many Unitarians care to deny that Jesus is separate from all others. 'Our Lord,' says Dean Lefroy, 'stands separated from every one who, possessed of an inspiration, sought to aid, to enlighten, to elevate his fellows.' True, or true enough to bar discussion. The Incarnation, then, is, with Dean Lefroy, the incoming of God into Humanity. But, if that is more than a phrase, it must mean something for us all, or the useful helpful process ceased when Jesus went away. If, after the appearance of Jesus, God was in Humanity in a way different from what He was before, we want to know how: and, as to this, the Dean does not help us in the slightest degree. If Jesus, as an actually new ancestor, as a God-man, had been the progenitor of a new race, we could see the sense of the phrase; but as the matter stands, the influence of Jesus in the world is purely spiritual and ethical. For our own part, we hold that Jesus was a symbol or representative of an Ideal: not that he made anything different as between God and man, but that he revealed,

taught, brought to light (any word will do), a truth that had always been a truth. He did not make God our Father: he showed that He was our Father, and persuaded the world to believe it and to act up to it: and this is how he is the mediator between God and man.

Dean Lefroy halts as to all this, but, still, he is evidently partly in the grip of the truth here. For instance, he says in various places;—

Humanity perpetually associated with Deity is an abiding incentive to a ministry whose sphere is in a world in which Deity is regarded as separated from humanity, and humanity is being associated with an animal ancestry. The Incarnation proclaims the most vicious man to be by incalculable moral divergencies and possibilities superior to the noblest animal. It makes the most wicked worth saving, renders it possible to 'honour all men,' and quickens the pulse in endeavouring to give active expression to our message. . . . The Incarnation has bestowed upon life its true value. It has associated it with Deity. It has revealed everlasting progress as its destiny. . . . Whereas at the beginning of the Christian era slaves were denied every right, even the right to live, the masses now exercise every right, possess every social and civic privilege, and even hold the destinies of rule, of country, of empire, in their hands. The religion of the Incarnation has silently, steadily, surely, effected this change. It has transformed the conditions on which society is based. It has infused a new power into human life by which oppression, tyranny, cruelty, have been banished from amongst the reserved forces of government, of order, of legislation. It has created an influence which was unknown when the empire was in its splendour, and when emperors grovelled in sin. It has saturated public opinion with the sense of right, of justice, of sympathy with sorrow, of pity for the fallen, of succour for the unfortunate, and even of chivalry towards the weak. Home, law, warfare, literature, education, labour, strikes, arbitration, and even the scale of human life, bear witness to the inexhaustibility which the religion of the Incarnation possesses. The message it bears to the individual is the unspeakable sanctity of the humblest life; the eternal possibilities of each; the oneness in dignity of all, through the nature we bear being permanently associated with the God-Man.

But how has all this occurred because of the Incarnation in Christ, if not because God in Christ has taught us to see God in man? Hence the Dean refers with approval to the view of 'Lux Mundi,' 'The Incarnation is the predestined climax of creation, independently of human sin,' and quotes Schleiermacher, thus;—

No man has held the independence of the Incarnation, of sin, of redemption, of salvation more boldly or more ably than Schleiermacher. In his mind the Incarnation is the moral

completeness of man. 'Christ appears as the completion of the hitherto incomplete creation ; as the second Adam, the beginner of the higher life of the completed creation, which could not be attained through the natural complex, the development of which began with and continued onwards from Adam. . . . But, further, the idea of the new creation must undoubtedly also be reduced back to that of sustainment ; because otherwise God would be brought under the conditions of time. This can be done by regarding the manifestation of Christ Himself, on the maintenance of that susceptibility to take up into Himself a consciousness of God, of absolute vigour, which was implanted in human nature from the beginning, and which has gone on continually developing ever since.'

Now all this is rational only if we grasp the truth that the Incarnation of the life of God in Humanity is a permanent fact in creation, of which Jesus is only a specimen or sign,—a part of it, not the whole ; one chapter, not the entire volume.

As to the fate of man in Hades, as we have said, the Dean is very decided. He quotes S. Cyprian only to condemn him, for the Saint said of 'the lost,' they 'cannot have God for their Father, as they had not the Church for their mother' ;—an odious doctrine, but not unknown to High Churchmen even in these days. Not so this enlightened Dean, who says ;—

The millions who tenanted the Spirit world before Christ came and the innumerable crowds who have entered it since, in absolute ignorance of God's redeeming love, may be, by the rigid exigency of logic, consigned to outer darkness, or to annihilation. Nevertheless, deep down in the souls of men, there is an instinct which thinks of the justice of the All-Just, of the love of the All-loving, of the patience of God, which is all but illimitable, because He is Eternal.

What an interesting thing ! The Dean of Norwich appeals from 'the Fathers' and from the once almost universal belief of Christendom to an instinct of the soul ! This better thought is based upon the curious reference of Peter to the descent of Christ into Hades. The discussion of this by Dean Lefroy is rather tedious, but the result is all we could wish. He holds that 'the human spirit' of Jesus literally went on 'an evangelistic mission' to Hades, and that, as we belong to him and must in all things be like him, we shall follow him in this.

The vital point, then, is that the work of Christ in Hades is continuous. He says ;—

If the Lord Jesus in his human spirit entered, as we shall enter, the invisible world, and there mysteriously chose for evangelisation those who centuries before had died in disobedience, shall we limit the powers of grace to the visit of Christ?

What Christ began may be continued by Christians. What His followers are expected to do here, who can deny that they may do there? especially if we accept the doctrines of the Gospel of the grace of God, when they teach us, as they do teach us, that Christ is the model and example, in proportion and in degree, of every one who, united to Him, is incorporated in Him. Christ's soul survived the death of His body; therefore shall the soul of every believer survive the death of his body. Christ's disembodied spirit descended into the invisible world; therefore the spirit of every believer shall descend into the same place. In that place, the spirit of Christ, apart from His body which was in the grave, possessed and exercised active powers; in the same place, the spirits of believers, apart from their bodies, which are in their graves, shall possess and exercise the powers which His grace bestowed, developed, and here condescended to employ.

This idea is commended to our acceptance because of the softened light it casts upon the assertive problem, respecting the state of the heathen and their relation to the divine attributes of justice and mercy.

Who can exclude these millions, for whom Christ died, from the ministries of those who have gone from our society, and who while with us derived their highest joy from speaking of and working for the Lord, whose they were and whom they served? Who can hush into sepulchral silence, or banish into oblivion, the thought which comes like a ray of glory to light up the darkness of death, that those whose lives were here so rich in promise have been suddenly shortened, and their work abruptly ended, sometimes when their presence seemed necessary to its expansion, and sometimes when the fields were white already to harvest?—may they not have been ripened here for larger spheres? for more expansive enterprises? for higher, for holier, for illimitable service?

All this is perfectly satisfactory, and is specially significant as coming, not from a spiritual rationalist like Canon Wilberforce, or a scholarly apostle of 'sweet reasonableness' like Dr. Rashdall, but from a man who fervently believes that he is truly evangelical. Well, perhaps he is!

FEMININE ROWDIES.

THE 'Lancer lads,' as *The Daily Telegraph* calls them, lately took their annual dinner, 'with plenty of good ale' (says the sweet *Telegraph*) at Westminster, when Princess Adolphus, of Teck, presented prizes. Amongst the lads there was a 'hero,' 23 years of age, who took some part in the Omdurman butchering. The Princess gushingly shook hands with the 'hero,' and gave him a medal, and the lad was asked to tell them all about 'the Balaclava of the Soudan.' A Major-General emitted the usual gas about 'Queen and country,' and then a certain Lady Bancroft made the speech of the evening,—something like this (compression of swelling emotion is difficult)—'There is one here who is the hero of this night (the 'Balaclava' lad). He has fought for his country (that was a falsehood. The other people were fighting for their country!) I am sure he is a good fellow. If I were a man, I would almost give my life for such a medal as he courageously won and modestly wears. It is a thing to be proud of indeed, and I would never take it off if it were mine. (Addressing the soldier :) It is your most valuable possession. You have fought bravely for your country and your Queen. I congratulate you most heartily. It is a pity one of your comrades fell on the field of battle ('one,' and yet it was a 'Balaclava'!), and yet after all there is no more glorious death (not even on the Cross?). I remember Lord Wolseley saying to me, 'I do not want to die in bed, but on the field of battle, when my time comes.' Were I a man, there is no death I would choose, had I the power of selection, but a soldier's on the field. Let me congratulate you all, and wish you success in the military career which I advise you to choose, and to which I hope you will stick.'

We know nothing of this sanguinary lady: but, as *The Telegraph* says that the lads 'wildly joined in prolonged cheers,' we suppose the people who put her up knew what they were about. If this lady were properly tanned and tattooed, she would make a lovely savage.

THE NEW ROME. *

It is said that, in his early days, Mr. Robert Buchanan announced his resolve to be poet laureate, after Tennyson. His failure on that score must be attributed to want of knowledge of himself, not to want of ability. To be poet laureate surely cannot be an object of ambition to a true poet, though a true poet might consent to accept the post: but Robert Buchanan went quite the wrong way to work if he ever really aimed at it. In almost the last page of this splendidly blazing book, he describes what modern Society wants, and what modern Society expects its official persons to want,

For a verse-writer to be a thinker and a pioneer, in revolt against political and religious abominations is regarded as an impertinence; his business is to twang the lyre or strum the banjo, leaving politics to the thieves and thinking to the philosophers.

And, in his last touching poem, in which he describes the ideal of his youth—still the ideal of his maturity—he says;—

Revolver, sword in hand,
Friend of the weak and worn,
A boy, I took my stand
Against the knights forlorn;
Eager against the Strong
To lead the martyr'd van,
I strive 'gainst Lust and Wrong
As when the fight began!

Never to bow and kneel
To any brazen Lie,—
To love the worst, to feel
The least is ev'n as I,—
To hold all fame unblest
That helps no struggling man,
In this, as in the rest,
I end as I began!

It is absurd to start out with such a programme, as a candidate for poet laureateship. But, still, we are sorry Buchanan did not arrive:—he could have borne it: he has so much energy to spare, and such a margin for restraint of the rushing wind and the fire. As it is, we are afraid that much of this wonderful ability and strength has gone to waste.

Strange to say, Herbert Spencer is, of all men, responsible for this tumultuous and brilliant fighting book. The gentle sage asked the fiery poet to write a satire on the times, and suggested that Society gave ample material 'for strong denunciation and display of white hot anger.' But Buchanan found the satire not exactly the message he cared to deliver, and, instead of it, he gathered

* The New Rome: poems and ballads of our empire. By Robert Buchanan. London: Walter Scott.

together this amazing collection of short poems on modern London ('The New Rome') and on the sins and sorrows and hypocrisies of it.

The result is a volume of simply terrific ability—millions of miles away from any conceivable poet laureateship, unless, indeed, Buchanan's wise and pathetic Devil were king: for this Devil is a fierce humanitarian possessed with an intense pity for the crucified Christ (such a failure!) and his poor brethren:—an extraordinary conception!

These poems, for the most part, deal directly and frankly with real life, and, merely as testimony and teaching, mostly on the right side, we gladly welcome them, though here and there we are bewildered and, in a way, shocked. But, truly no one should read this book in a drawing room frame of mind. To this man might almost be applied the burning words of Isaiah;

'Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

'Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat?

'I have trodden the wine-press alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury: and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

'For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.'

But it must not be inferred that the book is a book of horrors:—far from it, very far from it. What we have said refers only to the spirit of the book, in its intense sympathies, and in its flashing indignation against the evils of the age; but the prophet never forgets that he is a poet; the fighter is never unmindful of his emancipating mission.

There are some things we could wish away; but a free-lance like this must be taken as he is: and he is splendid.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

THE GREAT EUROPEAN BANDITS.—If we were not so sodden in selfishness, we should regard in a very different way the doings of 'the great powers.' Raiding and robbery appear to be the order of the day, and nobody in the high places seems particularly ashamed. The action of Italy in relation to its demand for a lease (a gift?) of Sanmun Bay by China is a good specimen of what is going on. The refusal of the demand is said to put Italy in a position of advantage, as it can now demand 'satisfaction for the insult.' Was there ever such a scientific thieving? *The Times* correspondent at Rome points out that not only is Italy now compelled by considerations of dignity to seek satisfaction for the rebuff without granting that compensation which might justly have been demanded by China had negotiations proceeded smoothly, but 'the civilised nations interested in Far Eastern politics will find themselves morally obliged to second Italy in preventing the creation of so dangerous a precedent as would be constituted by allowing such cavalier treatment of European diplomacy to go unpunished.' Whereas Italy might have been compelled to subscribe to onerous conditions for a lease of Sanmun Bay, 'she will now be enabled to demand the cession of that harbour as satisfaction for the insult she has received, nor will the European Powers find it easy to discountenance her action.'

So then, if 'a great power' wants some weak power's territory, it must ask a lease; and, if the lease is refused, that is an insult which entitles the 'power' to take what it likes. And the other great powers, being in the same line of business, will back it up!

THE DEGRADATION OF THE NEWSPAPERS.—The demand for slush and blood is, of course, great in London, but even London, with its foolish, morbid and cruel sensationalism, has room for a clean evening paper that would steadily steer right. How bad the thing is may be gathered from the fact that the cleanest of them all, *The Echo*, is continually vexing us, both with its contents' bills and its head lines. Here, for instance, is its reporting of the latest murder. The report is put in the most prominent place, and there are two-and-a-half inches of sensational head lines, followed at intervals by vulgar shocker lines in big capital letters, such as—'STORY OF THE CRIME,' 'THE NEW LODGERS,' 'WHEN THE MYSTERY BEGAN,' 'FRIDAY PASSES,' 'THROUGH THE KEY-HOLE,' 'A SICKENING SMELL,' 'LYING IN A POOL OF BLOOD':—all so placed as to keep the reader on the *qui vive* and thrilled.

Surely if loathsome details must be printed (which we deny), the nasty work should be kept as free as possible from unwholesome prominence.

JINGO CANT.—Referring to the Muscat incident, *The Herald of Peace*, pithily says; 'Let us be frank and say that this is the whole of the matter—that we are simply using our

greater strength to prevent two other countries from making a bargain which they have a right to make, but which we do not like them to make, because we think we should be safer now, and richer hereafter, if it is not made. If we think this an honourable and generous use of great power let us so use it, and avow that we are so using it, and if we do not think it a generous or honourable use, let us forego it and bear the danger or loss like men; but, whatever we do, let us not, like some of our Imperialists, while acting on the good old rule that those should take who have the power, talk sanctimoniously about the steps forced upon us by our devout regard for legality. It is this habit of explaining our appetites as manifestations either of our own singular goodness, or of a divine purpose at work in the world, that gives a sting to foreign talk about British cant.'

ANOTHER BRITISH SUCCESS.—A short time ago, the London evening paper placards announced in huge type,—'Frontier Fighting. British success.' Later on, 'Tribesmen defeated. Ten villages burnt.' On reading the glorious news, we found that in addition to burning ten villages we had captured 3,000 cattle. They call this 'fighting for our queen and country.' What blackguards we can be!

BRITISH BODY SNATCHERS.—Say what we like about the destruction of the Mahdi's tomb, and the cutting up and dispersion of his body, it was a part of the nasty 'Avenge Gordon' programme. It would not much matter if we did not put on airs and claim to be civilised, Christian, and all the rest of it. As it is, we shew a good many signs of being pretty much like other animals, with a little extra polish and paint.

THE BLACK MAN'S BURDEN.

FOR ENGLAND.

'CONCORD' prints a stinging poem by George Lynch, 'in answer to a certain hymn of hypocrisy.' We are glad to see it. The adoration of Kipling and his rowdy rhymes needs a corrective. Here is the poem:—

Bear we the Black Man's burden!
 We hold the best we breed
 To give them into exile
 To serve our captor's greed;
 To serve in heavy harness
 These fattened folk and mild,
 We 'new-caught sullen peoples,
 Half devil and half child.'

Bear we the Black Man's burden!
 The stealing of our lands,
 Driven backwards, always backwards,
 E'en from our desert sands;
 You bring us your own poison,
 Fire liquor that you sell,
 While your Missions and your Bibles
 Threaten your White Man's hell.

Bear we the Black Man's burden!—
 The White Man's 'God of Peace'
 Who speaks through murderous Maxims
 Through wars that seldom cease;
 When flames of our hut-homes smoulder,
 When the braves of our tribes are slain,
 The priest of this Peace God preaches
 'You should not fight again.'

Bear we the Black Man's burden!—
 In patience we abide,
 Tricked by you smug-faced liars,
 Arch-hypocrites allied;
 By subtle speech and cunning,
 A hundred times made plain,
 You cheat us for your profit,
 You damn us for your gain.

Bear we the Black Man's burden!
 That iron rule of kings,
 That counts our women's tribute
 A tale of trifling things.
 What port have not ye entered?
 What road have not ye trod?
 What crime have ye omitted?
 All in the name of God!

Bear we the Black Man's burden—
 A slavery more or less—
 Nor dare we call on Freedom
 To cloak our weariness.
 By all ye steal or covet—
Not what you say, but do—
 We 'silent, sullen' peoples
 Shall weigh your God and you.

THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN.

FOR AMERICA.

THE *Boston Evening Transcript* administers to
 America its needed dose, thus;—

A Malay and a Hottentot.
 Were fighting on the plains
 In most unruly fashion
 For very doubtful gains,
 When there came a Christian gentleman
 Towards them, through the rains.

The Malay and the Hottentot
 Were very, very bare!
 For dampness and malaria
 They plainly didn't care.
 But the well-dressed Christian gentleman
 Began to shake and swear.

'I wish you wouldn't fight,' said he,
 'It's shocking and it's rude,
 But since you will, I've brought to you
 A basketful of food.
 I think the Malay needs it most;
 I've brought it for his good.'

No thanks the Christian gentleman
 From either party drew;
 They fought with angry vehemence
 And quite obscured his view.
 Said he at last, 'Such wickedness
 Will never, never do!'

He loaded his revolver,
 This good and kindly man,
 And shot as straight and fired as fast
 As many Christians can;
 And then he truly felt himself
 A good Samaritan.

'I've killed 'em both,' said he with pride,
 'Their pain is hard to see,
 But all must suffer when it comes
 To such a point with me.
 What I have done is all because
 Of my humanity.'

The dying Hottentot looked up
 The dying Malay, too,
 The Christian gentleman was just
 Departing from their view,
 He held what they were fighting for,
 And held it tightly, too.

'Oh, shameful sight!' they cried aloud:
 'What could I do?' he said;
 'Someone must take this property
 For soon you will be dead.
 I didn't wish to fight,' said he,
 'Your deeds be on your head.'

'This is a noble war,' he cried,
 'I come to save the weak,
 The oppressed are e'er my brethren.'
 The Malay tried to speak:
 'I wish,' he said, with emphasis,
 'I wish I had your cheek!'